Food Systems, Malnutrition and Public Health
CPH 645

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Office Hours:  Mon 9-12 or by
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Course Description:

This course explores key issues in public health and malnutrition through a food systems
perspective. The class is based on the premise that malnutrition is related to all facets of a
highly interconnected food system consisting of food production, food processing and
distribution, and food consumption. Understanding how the various parts of the food
system interact is essential in the design of effective public health policy and projects to
combat malnutrition in all its various forms.

Over the semester, we will look at public health nutrition challenges throughout the food
system, both in the US and in the developing world. We will also look at efforts in
Kentucky and other states to reshape the current U.S. food system. We will be reading
from a wide range of academic disciplines, including public health, anthropology,
sociology, agriculture, political science, geography, and more.

Course Objectives:

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:
1. Explain how the food system shapes the environment in which individual eating
   behavioral decisions are made;
2. Articulate the political, cultural, economic, and social forces that shape the U.S. and
global food system;
3. Describe the various approaches public health practitioners have taken and could take
to reshape the food-related health behaviors of U.S. and global citizens; and
4. Design an intervention to address a public health food-related problem, written in the
   form of a formal project proposal.
Elements of Course Grade

1. Exams (40% of total) Points possible Percentage of grade
   Midterm 200 20%
   Final (non-cumulative) 200 20%

2. Intervention Proposal (50% total)
   Abstract 50 5%
   Outline 50 5%
   First draft 100 10%
   Final draft 200 20%
   Oral presentation 100 10%

3. Discussion participation 100 10%
   1000 100%

Final grade calculations

A  90% +
B  80-89%
C  70-79%

I track grades on a scale of 0-1000. An assignment worth 20% of your grade (such as the exams) is worth 200 points. If you have any question about your grade over the course of the semester, I will be happy to meet with you.

Course Exams:

The midterm and final exams for this course are take-home, open-book exams, each worth 20% of your final grade. You will write, as well as answer, the questions. An important part of this exam is for you to determine what the key issues and perspectives are that we have covered in the course and base your proposed exam questions on that determination. Before each exam (by 10/3 and 12/5), you will submit to me (by email, in a MS Word document, to mark.swanson@uky.edu) five proposed essay-type questions that will allow you to show me your understanding of the central issues covered in readings and in class. I will select two of these questions and give them back to you in class one week prior to the exam due date. You will answer these two questions in the form of a paper (1000-1300 words per question), complete with cited references to the course readings. Pay special attention to the organization of your answer – if it’s not well-organized, it can be very hard to follow.

Intervention Proposal
The major assignment for this course is the preparation of a proposed public health intervention to address a problem of your choice in the general area of malnutrition and food. The purpose is for you to identify a significant problem and propose a method of solving that problem. You will do this in a formal project proposal, written in response to a mock Request for Proposals (RFP). The details of this assignment will be explained in a separate document. You will turn in portions and drafts of the project throughout the semester and bring them together in your final proposal.

Required Readings

There are two required texts for this class.


There are also a series of journal articles and websites that are listed in the course outline. (Note: all readings listed in course outline are required reading). For those journals where I could, I listed a web link to the article (or the journal home page, in some cases) that should be accessible free from any computer on the UK campus. Many will not be accessible free from your home computer. You are responsible for reading ALL the assigned readings, even those not available on the web.

A complete set of the readings, including both those available on the web and those not available, will be kept in CPH 111. You may check this out for up to 3 hours.

An electronic copy of this syllabus, complete with links accurate as of 8/25/05, is available on the Blackboard site at http://www.uky.edu/Blackboard/. Any changes to this syllabus will be updated at that site.

Academic Integrity

I take the University Code of Conduct very seriously, and suggest you do likewise. I will, if necessary, pursue appropriate disciplinary action against any students committing plagiarism and cheating http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.htm. The minimum penalty for either of these academic offenses is an "E" in the course, with suspension and dismissal possible.

The concept of take home exams raises potential questions of plagiarism or outside assistance in completing the test. The short answer is “Don’t risk it.” I am very likely to notice an exam or proposal showing signs of being written by someone other than the
student. At any rate, both proposals and exams are specific to each student, so cheating is unlikely to benefit anyone.

Discussion Participation

A good class discussion, in my opinion, is one of the best ways to stimulate creative thinking about course readings. The interplay of ideas among participating students helps make the readings come into focus. Good discussions don’t just happen, however. We can all get the most out of this class if some basic ground rules are followed by everyone.

Each student is expected to attend all class sessions – with only one class per week, any absence means missing a significant amount of material. While attendance will not be taken formally, repeated absences will be reflected in the discussion participation portion of your grade.

Effective participation in class discussion requires reading all assigned material prior to the class session. Students cannot achieve full marks for this portion of the grade unless they participate actively in class discussions about the readings. I am less concerned about the quantity than the quality of class discussion – it’s what you say, not how much you say. Good preparation for class discussion would be to write down 2 or 3 interesting discussion points from the reading and spend some time thinking before class about what issues/questions/disagreements/etc. you’d like to raise.

Accommodations for Special Needs

Any student with a disability who is taking this course and needs classroom or exam accommodations should contact the Disability Resource Center, 257-2754, Room 2 Alumni Gym, jkarnes@uky.edu.

A note on deadlines

Deadlines are noted in the course schedule below. It is your responsibility to make certain I have all assignments to me by the beginning of class on the due date (or via email, especially in the case of proposed exam questions). In keeping with the idea of practicing proposal writing, the deadlines for this course are absolute. If you submit a grant proposal to a funding agency, anything turned in late will not be accepted. The same policy, with modifications for University policy allowing excused absences, http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.htm will be followed in this course. Because printers and computers seem to like to act up at inopportune times, leave yourself extra leeway. Print out drafts of your proposal as it nears completion, to make certain you have something to turn in if you suffer a technology breakdown.
Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1 (8/25):  Introduction to course

Week 2 (9/1):  Culture, Agriculture, and Public Health

Topics:
- Food Systems perspective
- Sustainability
- Public Health and Agriculture

Sobal, Jeffery, Laua Kettel Khan, and Carole Bisogni

Cohen, Larry, et al.

Week 3 (9/8):  Agricultural Production and Safety

Topics:
- Farm occupational safety
- Agricultural chemical use

Readings:
Lyson, Thomas A.


Deadlines:  Abstract of proposal due 9/8
Week 4 (9/15): Food and Culture

Topics:
- Agrarianism
- Aging
- Gender

Readings:
Schoenberg, Nancy

Sharkey, J. R., and N. E. Schoenberg

Harnack, L., et al.

Week 5 (9/22) The U.S. Food System

Topics:
- Structural changes in the food system
- Who controls the food system?

Readings:
Heffernan, William, Mary Hendrickson, and Robert Gronski

Heffernan, William, et al.

Lyson, Thomas A., and Annalisa Lewis Raymer
**Week 5 continued**

Pollan, Michael  

**Week 6 (9/29): Politics, Power, and Food**

**Topics:**
- The food industry and government
- Science, business, and politics

**Readings:**
Nestle, Marion  

Chapters 1-7

**Deadlines:** Proposal outline due 9/29

**Week 7 (10/6): Politics, Power, and Food**

**Topics:**
- Food in schools

**Readings:**
Food Politics, Chapters 8-9

Crooks, Deborah L.  

**Week 8 (10/13): Politics, Power, and Food**

**Topics:**
- Public Health and Food Politics

**Readings:**
Caraher, Martin, and John Coveney  
Freudenberg, Nicholas

Dorfman, Lori, Lawrence Wallack, and Katie Woodruff
2005 More Than a Message: Framing Public Health Advocacy to Change http://heb.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/3/320

Dixon, Jane, and Cathy Banwell

Center for Consumer Freedom http://www.consumerfreedom.com/index.cfm

Please look at this website and make notes on issues of particular interest for class discussion. This is a food industry association that is spearheading the industry’s work against regulation. Consider the items you see on the CCF website in relation to the Krugman article below.

Krugman, Paul


Deadlines:
• Take home midterm questions due (Monday, 10/10)
• Take home midterm issued in class

FOOD CONSUMPTION

Week 9 (10/20): Malnutrition in US

Topics:
• Undernourishment
• Overeating
• Poverty

Readings:
http://tinyurl.com/8veto (Note: you may have to register for this site – go to https://subs.ama-assn.org/ama/exec/guest?url= for free registration)

University of Kentucky Prevention Research Center
(A copy will be provided in class)

Fitchen, Janet

Deadlines:
• Take home midterm due

Week 10 (10/27): Public Health Response to US malnutrition

Topics:
• Undernourishment
• Overeating

Readings:
Gedrich, Kurt

French, Simone A.

Deadlines:
Review draft of intervention proposal due 10/27
Week 11 (11/3): Global malnutrition

Topics:
- Nutrition transition
- Hunger
- Obesity

Readings:
Schneider, Dona

Popkin, Barry M.

Gardner, Gary, and Brian Halweil

12 (11/10): Local Food Systems

Topics:

Readings:
Bellows, Anne C.

Guptill, Amy, and Jennifer L. Wilkins

Kloppenburg, Jack, Jr., John Hendrickson, and G.W. Stevenson

McIlvaine-Newsad, Heather, Christopher D. Merrett, and Patrick McLaughlin
2004 Direct from Farm to Table: Community Supported Agriculture in Western Illinois. Culture and Agriculture 26(1 and 2):149-163.
Week 13 (11/17): Local food movement

Topics:

Readings:
Bellows, Anne C., and Michael W. Hamm
2002 International effects on and inspiration for community food security policies and practices in the USA. Critical Public Health 13(2):107-123.
http://tinyurl.com/cvpdp

Hendrickson, Mary K., and William D. Heffernan
http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/bpl/soru/2002/00000042/00000004/art00221

(11/24) Thanksgiving

Week 14 (12/1) Student Presentations

Deadlines:
Final proposals due

Week 15 (12/8): Student Presentations

Deadlines:
• Take home final questions due 12/5 (Monday), emailed or delivered to my office by 5pm
• Final proposals due
• Take home final issued in class

(12/15) Final exam due (typed and turned in by 5pm to 111B College of Public Health or emailed to mark.swanson@uky.edu )